



Reptile Presence/Likely Absence Survey Report

**Land to the rear of Bull Inn
Bull Lane
Bethersden
Ashford
Kent
TN26 3LB**

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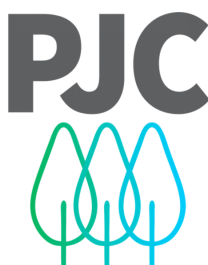
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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PJC Consultancy Ltd was commissioned by Esquire Developments to undertake a reptile presence/likely absence survey on a parcel of land to the rear of Bull Inn, Bull Lane, Bethersden, Kent, TN26 3LB, as identified within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal ref: 5543E/24/02 (PJC Consultancy, 2024). The purpose was to highlight the potential of the site to support protected species, notably reptiles, and recommend suitable ecological avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures, and licencing requirements, where appropriate. When implemented successfully, these recommendations will ensure that the development proceeds in line with all relevant laws pertaining protected reptile species, as well as contributing to an increase in site biodiversity. This report has been produced in accordance with NPPF – more specifically *Chapter 15 ‘Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment’* as well as the Ashford Local Plan 2023 (Ashford Borough Council, 2019).

Based on current proposals, the results of the reptile presence/likely absence surveys can be summarised in the following table:

Protected Species/Habitats	Suitable Habitat Present	Recommended Further Surveys	Ecological Mitigation, Compensation and Enhancements
Reptiles	On-site habitats, including the poor semi-improved grassland, dense/scattered scrub, hedgerow and tall ruderal growth.	None required provided the mitigation measures are adhered too.	All works should be carried out under a Precautionary Method of Works. Clearance of the hibernacula features should be undertaken outside of the reptile hibernation season (November-March inclusive).



2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Instruction

- 2.1.1 PJC Consultancy Ltd was commissioned by Esquire Developments to undertake a reptile presence/likely absence survey on a parcel of land to the rear of Bull Inn, Bull Lane, Bethersden, Kent, TN26 3LB (hereafter referred to as the 'Site').
- 2.1.2 The requirement to undertake a further reptile presence/ likely absence survey was detailed within the initial Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) report (PJC Consultancy, 2024) (Report ref: 5543E/24/02) which should be read in conjunction with this phase 2 ecological survey report.

2.2 Survey Objectives

- 2.2.1 The aim of this report is to ascertain the presence/likely absence of reptiles within the Site and, if presence is confirmed, ascertain whether the Site qualifies as a Key Reptile Site; and to provide recommendations for further survey, mitigation and enhancement measures to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains where possible, in line with Chapter 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023).

2.3 Documents and Information Provided

- 2.3.1 The following documents were used to aid the preparation of this report:
- The Sketch Site Layout Plan (Drawing No: 23.073 – SK02) (ON Architecture, 2023);
 - The Site Layout Plan (Drawing No: 23.073 - 0000 - Site Location Plan (ON Architecture, 2024);
 - Parameter Plan (Drawing No: 23.073 - 0005 - Parameter Plan (ON Architecture, 2024);
 - Wider Illustrative Site Plan (Drawing No: 23.073 - 103 - P1 - Wider Illustrative Site Plan (ON Architecture, 2024);
 - Illustrative Site Layout Plan (Drawing No: 23.073 - 100 - Illustrative Site Layout Plan (ON Architecture, 2024); and
 - Illustrative Site Layout Plan Wider (Drawing No: 23.073 - 106 - Illustrative Site Layout Plan Wider (ON Architecture, 2024).

2.4 Scope of Report

- 2.4.1 This presence/likely absence report is only concerned with the habitats and features within the property boundaries of the Site, or in areas that have the potential to be affected by the proposed new development.

2.5 Proposal

- 2.5.1 The development proposals are anticipated to include the construction of multiple residential dwellings with associated access and gardens as well as a communal open space.

2.6 Site Description

- 2.6.1 A full description of the Site can be found within the PEA report (PJC/5668E/24). The location of the buildings/trees surveyed as part of this report can be seen within Appendix I.

2.7 Legislation and Planning Policy

- 2.7.1 This reptile presence/likely absence report has been compiled with reference to relevant wildlife and countryside legislation, planning policy and the UK Biodiversity Framework. Their context and applicability is explained as appropriate in the relevant sections of the report and additional details are presented in Appendix II.



- 2.7.2 Reptile are protected under European (Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 and national (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)) legislation. This means that it is an offence to deliberately capture, injure or kill a wild reptile.
- 2.7.3 Reptiles, including the slow worm *Anguis fragilis* and common lizard *Zootoca vivipara*, are also listed as a Species of Principal Importance (SPI) under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. This means public bodies, including local planning authorities have a duty to have regard for SPI when carrying out their functions, including determining planning applications.



3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Reptile Presence/Likely Absence Surveys

- 3.1.1 In total, 55 artificial reptile refugia, comprising bitumen felt tiles, cut to measure approximately 1m x 0.5m, were distributed within suitable reptile habitat on-site. They were placed in locations adjacent to taller vegetation, log piles and earth banks, focusing on the south facing side of the features, which were considered to be reptile foci as they provide suitable cover and basking opportunities. The refugia were allowed to bed in for a minimum of 14 days prior to the survey commencing. Survey visits were evenly distributed across the active reptile season to ensure robust baseline data was collected.
- 3.1.2 A minimum of seven survey visits are required to determine the presence/likely absence of a species. Therefore, a total of seven survey visits were carried out. The details of each survey visit can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Details of each reptile survey visit.

Survey Date	Temp. (oC)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind Speed (B'fort Scale)	Precipitation
08/05/2024	17	5	B2	None.
15/05/2024	18	15	B1	None.
29/05/2024	18	75	B2	None.
05/06/2024	17	50	B3	None.
12/06/2024	16	75	B2	None.
19/06/2024	18	50	B2	None.
03/07/2024	16	40	B1	None.

- 3.1.3 The Site measures approximately 3.5ha and therefore the refugia were laid at a density of 15.7 tiles per hectare, 1.57 times more than the minimum of 10 per ha, as defined in good practice guidelines (Froglife, 1999). The location of the refugia can be seen in Appendix III.
- 3.1.4 As well as checking the refugia, observational surveys were also undertaken of any suitable habitat and natural features, which included visual searches of suitable basking and refuge points around the Site. Surveys were conducted during time periods suitable for the summer months (short periods in the morning and evening), in dry conditions of low wind and with air temperatures between 9oC and 18oC, following best practice methodology (Froglife, 1999; Sewell, et al, 2013).

Population Class Estimate

- 3.1.5 It should be noted that seven, rather than 20 survey visits were carried out at the Site. This is considered adequate to ascertain presence/likely absence of widespread reptile species within a Site. Guidelines state that 20 survey visits should be completed to determine population assessments; therefore, the population class assessment is an estimate of each species based on seven visits, which was assessed according to Table 6 below (Froglife, 1999). The population score refers to the peak



count of adults seen by observation and/or under reptile felts by one person in one day. This population score is calculated at a density of up to 10 felts per hectare.

Table 2: Reptile population assessment scores.

Species	Low population Score 1	Good population Score 2	Exceptional population Score 3
Adder	<5	5 - 10	>10
Grass snake	<5	5 - 10	>10
Common lizard	<5	5 - 20	>20
Slow worm	<5	5 - 20	>20

3.1.6 The methodology developed by Froglife 1999, adopts a mechanism known as the Key Reptile Site Register which can be used to obtain a basic evaluation of the population size and importance of the Site. It has been designed to identify and promote the safeguarding of important reptile sites, evaluating reptile populations at a local or regional scale, with outstanding assemblages being the guiding principle in judging sites.

3.1.7 To qualify for the Key Reptile Site Register, a site must meet at least one of the following criteria (Froglife, 1999):

- Supports three or more reptile species;
- Supports two snake species;
- Supports an exception population of one species (see Table 2);
- Supports an assemblage of species scoring at least 4 (see Table 2); or
- Does not satisfy any of the above but which is of particular regional importance due to local rarity.

3.2 Limitations of Survey

3.2.1 Due to the transient nature of reptiles and the fact that the habitats present on site and their management are likely to change over time, the findings of the reptile presence/likely absence surveys are only considered valid for a period of up to two years.

3.2.2 This document has been prepared for the stated proposal (2.4.1) and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an additional check being carried out by the author as to its suitability in relation to any updated proposals. PJC Consultancy accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequence of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. PJC Consultancy accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person by whom it was commissioned.



4 RESULTS

4.1 Reptile Presence/Likely Absence Surveys

- 4.1.1 A single species of reptile, common lizard, was recorded within the Site during the survey effort. A single reptile was recorded on the second to last survey visit.
- 4.1.2 The common lizard was recorded within the transitional habitat between the dense scrub and the taller grassland within the eastern extent of the Site.
- 4.1.3 The results of the surveys can be seen in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Summary of reptile survey visits.

Date	Common Lizard		Observations
	Adult	Juvenile	
08/05/2024	0	0	1 common toad <i>bufo bufo</i> was recorded under mat 41
15/05/2024	0	0	None.
29/05/2024	0	0	1 common toad <i>bufo bufo</i> was recorded under mat 33
05/06/2024	0	0	1 common toad <i>bufo bufo</i> was recorded under mat 33
12/06/2024	0	0	None.
19/06/2024	1 (M)	0	None.
03/07/2024	0	0	1 common toad <i>bufo bufo</i> was recorded under mat 41

- 4.1.4 The results of the population class assessment estimate can be found in Table 4 below.

Table 15: Reptile population assessment scores.

Species	Peak Adult Count	Population/Ha	Population Score
Common Lizard	1	1	1 'low'

- 4.1.5 The Site is considered to support a low population of common lizard.
- 4.1.6 The Site does not meet the registered criteria for a Key Reptile Site by supporting an assemblage of species scoring at least four.



5 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Reptiles

- 5.1.1 The Site was considered to support a low population of common lizard and works associated with the proposed development, such as habitat clearance, could therefore result in the death or injury of reptiles present within the Site.
- 5.1.2 In order to comply with legislation protecting reptiles, the mitigation measures detailed within the Precautionary Method of Works below, should be adhered to.
- 5.1.3 Access and egress routes for people and plant must be kept to existing areas of hardstanding, bare earth and grassland (providing the grassland sward has been maintained below 100mm in height).
- 5.1.4 It is recommended that clearance of all grassland, scrub and ruderal growth is undertaken using a sensitive vegetation clearance approach whereby a two phased cut is undertaken, firstly reducing the vegetation to 150mm above ground level, and then after a 24hr period, reducing the vegetation to ground level. Vegetation clearance should be undertaken in a north to south/west direction, making these areas unsuitable for reptiles. This will encourage them to disperse into retained semi-natural habitats immediately south and west of the Site that are being retained as part of the development. The timing of these works should coincide with reptiles being active (generally in dry, warm weather and greater than 9°C air temperature).
- 5.1.5 As a further precaution, any excavation works or actions that would impact upon potential reptile hibernation features, such as exposed tree roots or rabbit burrows should be carried out outside the reptile hibernation season (i.e. between April – September inclusive) when reptiles are considered active (and in greater than 9°C air temperature). All features must be deconstructed sensitively, whereby removing half of the feature (top-down) and removing the second half after 24 hours.
- 5.1.6 All suitable reptile habitat removal must be supervised at all times by a suitably qualified ecologist.
- 5.1.7 All captured reptiles during the destructive search should be placed into the on-site receptor area within the retained grassland habitat within the northern and western aspect of the Site. The grassland will be enhanced to increase its suitability for reptiles by the creation of a species rich grassland by increasing the foraging opportunities for reptiles. To further increase the carrying capacity of the onsite receptor area, as well as compensating for the loss of hibernation habitat, it is recommended that deadwood habitats i.e. a log pile and a hibernaculum are incorporated into the design proposals to increase its suitability for reptiles.
- 5.1.8 All arisings generated from habitat clearance works must be removed from Site and should not be stored on Site for any longer than a 24-hour period. In the event that this is not possible, all arisings must be stored within a skip or a minimum of 10m away from retained suitable reptile habitat, and only on existing hardstanding or bare earth.
- 5.1.9 All excavations should be excavated individually and back filled immediately where possible. Where this is not possible, excavations must be covered to prevent reptiles (and other animals) becoming trapped within the excavation. If this is also not possible, one or both sides of the excavation must be sloped in order to allow egress from the excavation.
- 5.1.10 All machinery, equipment and materials must be stored on areas identified by an ecologist as being unsuitable for reptiles, for example, grassland of a short sward.
- 5.1.11 All site workers, particularly those involved in habitat clearance works, must remain vigilant at all times during construction works if at any point during construction works any protected species or signs of protected species, including reptiles are identified, the following instructions must be adhered to:
- Stop works immediately and leave the area;



- Inform an ecologist immediately who will then provide further guidance/instructions;
- Do not try to handle a reptile; and
- Do not resume construction works until advised it is safe to do so by a suitably qualified ecologist.

5.1.12 Providing the avoidance and mitigation measures detailed within the Precautionary Method of Works are implemented in full, the proposed works are considered highly unlikely to result in the death or injury of any reptiles present within the Site.

5.2 Ecological Enhancements

5.2.1 Under Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006 there is a duty to have regard to biodiversity conservation. In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) and the Ashford Local Plan 2030 (2019) encourages ecological enhancement to be integrated into development projects in order to achieve an overall net-gain in biodiversity. Given the above, the following enhancement recommendations should be considered and incorporated into the final design proposals:

- Planting of native species rich hedgerows and/or 'natural buffer strips' along the access roads and plot boundaries. Approximately five woody plants should be planted per metre of hedgerow, in double staggered rows. The hedgerow should be managed on an annual rotation, whereby half of each hedgerow is cut in any one year. This will encourage a diverse structure to produce both a wide and dense hedgerow. Woody species planted could include the following species:
 - Oak *Quercus* sp;
 - Hazel *Corylus avellana*;
 - Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*;
 - Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*;
 - Field maple *Acer campestre*;
 - Holly *Ilex aquifolium*;
 - Elder *Sambucus nigra*; and
 - Crab apple *Malus sylvestris*.
- Creation of areas of species-rich meadow grassland within the Site, ideally within wide 'natural buffer strips' along the Site boundaries. These areas could provide additional foraging and shelter opportunities for a wide variety of invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and bird and bat species. Plant species to be included within the wildflower seed mix should be appropriate for the Site and wider area. A wildflower seed mixture should be sown on the site in March, April or September. Once established, the grassland should be maintained via annual seed cutting in the autumn, following seed setting and use of pesticides, fertilizers or other chemicals, avoided.
- Incorporation of dead wood habitat piles within areas of retained suitable habitat for example underneath tree canopies and along pond margins. These are used by both invertebrates such as the stag beetle which is a SPI and by reptiles and widespread amphibians as refugia.



6 REFERENCES

Ashford Borough Council (2019). Ashford Local Plan 2030 [PDF] Available from: <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/planning-and-development/planning-policy/adopted-developmentplan-documents/adopted-local-plan-to-2030/>

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Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. CIEEM.

Froglife (1999). Froglife Advice Sheet 10: reptile survey. Froglife, London.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2023) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) [online] Available from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1182995/NPPF_Sept_23.pdf [Accessed 30.07.2024].

Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) (2024). MAGIC. Natural England, Leeds. [online]. Available from: <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/home.html> [Accessed 30.07.2024].



7 APPENDICES

Appendix I: Site Location Plan



LEGEND:

Site Boundary

STATUS:

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Sussex Office: Rocks Yard, Victoria Rd, Herstmonceux, Hailsham, BN27 4TQ.
TN26 1AE
T: 01323 832120.

Kent Office: The Watermill, The Mill Business Park, Maidstone Road, Ashford, Kent.
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CLIENT:

Esquire Developments

PROJECT:

Land to the rear of Bull Inn
Kent
TN26 3HA

TITLE:

Appendix I: Site Location Plan

SCALE AT A4:
1:7,020

DRAWN:
LM

APPROVED:
TK

PROJECTION:
EPSG:27700

DATE:
11/07/24

DATE:
11/07/24

DRAWING No:

PJC/5543E/24/A1/V2

Basemap: Google Satellite (obtained through QuickMapServices QGIS-plugin), Map data © Google



Appendix II: Legislation and Planning Policy

Legislation

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 is the UK transposition of the European Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna, 1992, or the 'Habitats Directive'. The directive provides protection of key habitats and species of European importance. Those key habitats and species are listed in Annexes II and IV of the directive.

Those species protected under the regulations and most likely encountered during development include:

- All bat species
- Hazel dormouse
- Great crested newt
- Common otter

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is the primary legislation for the protection of wildlife in Great Britain. This legislation is the means by which the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (the 'Bern Convention') and the European Union Directives on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC) and Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna and Flora (92/43/EEC) are implemented in Great Britain. All breeding birds, their nests, eggs and young are protected under the Act, which makes it illegal to knowingly destroy or disturb the nest site during nesting season. Schedules 1, 5 and 8 afford protection to individual birds, other animals and plants respectively. The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 makes it an offence to 'recklessly' disturb a protected animal whilst it is using a place of rest or shelter or breeding/nest site

Those species protected under the act and most likely encountered during development include:

- All bat species
- All nesting birds
- Hazel dormouse
- Great crested newt
- Common otter
- Water vole
- All native reptile species
- White-clawed crayfish

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006

Section 40 of the Act requires all public bodies to have regard to biodiversity conservation when carrying out their functions. This is commonly referred to as the 'biodiversity duty'. Section 41 of the Act provides a list of habitats and species, which are of 'principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity.' This list aids decision makers such as public bodies in implementing their duty under



Section 40 of the Act. Under the Act these habitats and species are regarded as a material consideration in determining planning applications.

Reptiles

The four common reptile species, adder *Vipera berus*, grass snake *Natrix helvetica*, common lizard *Zootoca vivipara* and slow worm *Anguis fragilis* are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981, as amended) against deliberate and/or intentional killing, injuring and trade.

If common reptile species are found to be present or considered potentially present within a proposed development site. To ensure that no subsequent offence will be committed a precautionary method of working (written by a suitably qualified ecologist) and submitted to the relevant authority may be required to enable works to proceed with limited risks of offences being caused.

Biodiversity Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023

Published in 2023 the NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied by local authorities. It replaces all the Planning Policy Statements and Guidance (PPSs and PPGs). The NPPF emphasises the need for sustainable development, whilst specifying the need for protection of designated sites and priority habitats and priority species (as listed in section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006). Paragraph 174 of The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states:

“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
- recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
- maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
- minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
- preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
- remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.”

Paragraph 179 states that “to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and



- promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.”

Furthermore, paragraph 185 states that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying the following principles:

- if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Paragraph 181 states:

“The following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

- potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;
- listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and
- sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.”

Paragraph 182 states:

“The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.”

The UK Biodiversity Framework (2011-2020).

The UK Biodiversity Framework is an important framework that is owned, governed and implemented by the four UK countries, assisted by Defra and JNCC in their UK co-ordination capacities. Although differing in details and approach, the four UK countries have published strategies which promote the same principles and address the same global targets: joining-up our approach to biodiversity across sectors; and identifying, valuing and protecting our ‘Natural Capital’ to protect national well-being now and in the future. This new framework has been developed to enhance the recovery of priority habitats and species in England (published under section 41 of the NERC Act 2006), thereby contributing to the delivery of the England Biodiversity Strategy. The framework has been developed and endorsed by the England Biodiversity Group and wider partnership. It is the starting point for a more integrated approach to biodiversity conservation in England, building on the strengths of the



former UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) process and improving those areas where insufficient progress was being made.

Policy ENV2 The Ashford Green Corridor

The protection and enhancement of Ashford's Green Corridor is a key objective.

Development proposals within the identified Corridor designation (and proposed extensions) will be permitted, providing that it is compatible with, or ancillary to, their principal open space use or other existing uses, and it can be demonstrated that the proposal would not cause significant harm to the overall environment, biodiversity, visual amenity, movement networks or functioning of the Green Corridor.

Other forms of development proposals within the Green Corridor will not be permitted, unless it would be in accordance with a site specific policy in this Local Plan; or where it relates to a) the redevelopment of a suitable brownfield site or b) delivers overriding benefits, and in either scenario, that it can be demonstrated that there would be no significant harm to the overall environment, biodiversity, visual amenity, movement networks or functioning of the Green Corridor.

Development proposals on land adjoining the Green Corridor shall provide suitable access and links to the existing movement networks of the adjoining Green Corridor wherever possible. They must not cause significant harm to any of the key features and functions, and should make a positive contribution to the Green Corridor in respect of its environment, biodiversity, visual amenity, movement networks or functioning and its setting.

Development proposals must take into consideration the appraisals, projects and management recommendations set out for the specific areas in the Ashford Green Corridor Action Plan, including the identified proposed extension areas to the designation.

Policy ENV3a - Landscape Character and Design

All proposals for development in the borough shall demonstrate particular regard to the following landscape characteristics, proportionately, according to the landscape significance of the site:

- a) Landform, topography and natural patterns of drainage;*
- b) The pattern and composition of trees and woodlands;*
- c) The type and composition of wildlife habitats;*
- d) The pattern and composition of field boundaries;*
- e) The pattern and distribution of settlements, roads and footpaths;*
- f) The presence and pattern of historic landscape features;*
- g) The setting, scale, layout, design and detailing of vernacular buildings and other traditional man made features;*
- h) Any relevant guidance given in the Landscape Character SPD;*
- i) Existing features that are important to and contribute to the definition of the local landscape character shall be retained and incorporated into the proposed development; and,*
- j) Any non-designated, locally-identified, significant landscape features justified in a Parish Plan or equivalent document.*

Policy ENV3b – Landscape Character and Design in the AONBs

The Council shall have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Kent Downs and High Weald AONBs. Major development proposals within the AONBs will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and where it is demonstrated they are in the public interest. All proposals within or affecting the setting of AONBs will also only be permitted under the following circumstances:

- The location, form, scale, materials and design would conserve and where appropriate enhance or restore the character of the landscape.*



- *The development would enhance the special qualities, distinctive character and tranquility of the AONB.*
- *The development has regard to the relevant AONB management plan and any associated guidance.*
- *The development demonstrates particular regard to those characteristics outlined in Policy ENV3a, proportionate to the high landscape significance of the AONB.*

Policy ENV5 – Protecting Important Rural Features

All development in the rural areas of the Borough shall protect and, where possible, enhance the following features:

- a) Ancient woodland and semi-natural woodland;*
- b) River corridors and tributaries;*
- c) Rural lanes which have a landscape, nature conservation or historic importance;*
- d) Public rights of way; and,*
- e) Other local historic or landscape features that help to distinguish the character of the local area.*



Appendix III: Location of Reptile Refugia



LEGEND:

 Reptile refugia

 Red Line Boundary

Goggle Satellite

STATUS: FOR INFORMATION ONLY



Sussex Office: Rocks Yard, Victoria Rd, Herstmonceux, Hailsham, BN27 4TQ.
TN26 1AE
T: 01323 832120.

Kent Office: The Watermill, The Mill Business Park, Maidstone Road, Ashford, Kent.
TN26 1AE
T: 01233 225365
E: contact@pjiconsultancy.com
W: <https://www.pjiconsultancy.com>

CLIENT: Esquire Developments

PROJECT:
Land to the rear of Bull Inn
Kent
TN26 3HA

TITLE:
Appendix III - Reptile refugia plan

SCALE AT A4: 1:1,079	DRAWN: LM	APPROVED: TK
PROJECTION: EPSG:27700	DATE: 30/07/24	DATE: 30/07/24

DRAWING No:
PJC/5668E/24/A3/V2

Basemap: Google Satellite (obtained through QuickMapServices QGIS plugin). Map data © Google



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